



THE
INSTITUTE
OF LIVING

 HARTFORD HOSPITAL

Lisa B. Namerow, MD
Attending, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
Institute of Living/Hartford Hospital
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Presentation to Task force on Fatherless ness

Fatherlessness: The Pain

Notion of attachment Objects

1. Animal studies: Ducks, monkey, Penguins
 2. Human studies
 3. Attachment as a neurological and psychological process
- Father's Role in Early Development is Very Different than a Mother's

1. Studies of 6-week old infants show that infants can differentiate between mother and father as indicated by a heart rate decrease when mothers walk in room, and heart rate increase when fathers walk in room. Fathers play, mothers soothe, feed, comfort.
2. Experience with dad tends to be more physical, less predictable, helping children learn to manage their impulse control and their emotions.

Father Role in Later Development

1. Father as teacher
2. Father as role model
3. For girls, father as a major contributor to self-esteem
4. Father contributes to teaches self-regulation and self-control
5. Final goal is that experiences with the father become memories that help determine/promote judgment and contribute to decision making: Should we steal that? Should we hit him? Should we have sex now?

Fatherlessness

1. In males, sense of abandonment and the lack of early child experience seems to contribute to poor impulse control, aggression, a bravado of "I don't care".
2. In females, it can lead to self-loathing, self-injury, eating disorders, lack of self-respect.

The Statistics which reflect the cost

1. Children in fatherless homes are 5 times more likely to be poor.
2. 75% of American children living in single-parent homes will experience poverty while only 20% in 2-parent homes do the same.

Drug and ETOH use

Children in single-parent homes are at significant increased risk for drug abuse. They are 4.3 times more likely to smoke cigarettes.

Physical and Emotional health

1. 2-3 times more likely to have mental health problems
2. 3 out of 4 suicides occur in households where a parent has been absent.

Educational achievement

1. Fatherless children have lower grade point averages, lower college admissions, lower attendance.
2. Twice as likely to drop out of school.

Crime

1. More likely to be in trouble with the law.

Sexual Activity and Sexual Crimes

1. Very much mediated by the presence of father in the home.

Residential Treatment Center: Recent Experience

Father Involvement : The gain (Dr. Pruett)